



**DOWNSEND**  
SCHOOL



Proud to be nominated in the  
**Independent Schools of  
the Year 2019 Awards**

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11 June 2020

Dear Parent

**Re: Phased Re-Opening of Downsend**

Thank you for your patience and understanding over the past 48 hours in allowing me, and my SLT, the time to plan the next phase of the opening of Downsend School, following HM Government's Monday announcement. With 69 of the 80 Year pupils now on site, we have been reassured by the confidence that our Y6 parents have bestowed upon us.

Before I explain how the next few weeks will work, it is important that I clarify the principles that have guided our decision-making, which are as follows:

1. The importance of protecting the bubble system, in maximum classes of 15, in order to minimise any transmission
2. The need to maintain protocols (drop-off, cleaning, pick-up, break times etc) in order to ensure that pupil and staff wellbeing are at the heart of all we undertake
3. The importance of all of our Year groups. We do not believe that any Year group is more or less important than any other. Your children are equally valued, as are you, our parents, so it is our intention to find a way to return all our children at some point, but clearly not at the same time given the restrictions in place. In doing so, we hope to ensure that no pupil is exposed to the prospect of six months without spending time in the school, seeing their friends and teachers. We will share which Lower School children will be in for which weeks early next week
4. We are still pursuing options for pupils in Years 7 and 8 in the absence of clearer guidance from what the Government see as being Senior pupils.

In the week beginning 15 June, we will welcome Year 2 to join Year 6 on site for the week, to allow us to replicate our protocols simultaneously in the Lower and Upper Schools. Mrs Kirkham will be writing to Year 2 pupils later this afternoon and we have put additional cleaning in place, are broadening our one-way systems and ensuring that drop-off and pick-ups are effective and safe. Please be assured that we have every intention of getting as many of our 460 pupils back on site over the coming month. Early next week, you will have further clarity about how this affects you, and your children.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Thorpe  
Headmaster

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